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SERIES OF TRIALS PLANNED -- Svobodny Zitrek, No 15, 7 Mar 50

The Communists have prepared a new series of vengeful and intimidating trials of political opponents, who are tried in large groups. Death sentences are more and more frequent.

A group of students and nurses from the Brno sanatorium, who allegedly aided in the escape of political prisoners, were sentenced on 3 February in Brno. One of the accused, 22-year-old Bohumil Havlin, was sentenced to death, and 15 others were sentenced to prison for one to 25 years.

A group of persons accused of political, economic, and military espionage on behalf of an unarmed foreign power were sentenced on 11 February in Jihlava. Three of the accused, Karel Vesely, Jan Tucek, and Frantisek Rod, were sentenced to death, two persons were sentenced to life imprisonment, and 18 others received prison sentences ranging from 4 to 25 years.

A big trial of notable functionaries of the former National Socialist Party, who allegedly conspired against the regime, is being prepared at the State Court in Prague. The former representative, Dr Milada Horakova, is to be among the chief defendants.

Over 50 wealthier merchants and owners of larger restaurants have been arrested in Prague. All have been stripped of their property and sent to labor camps. The reasons for the arrests is the effort to convert Prague into a "city of workers."

SUPPRESS MEMBERS OF FORMER RESISTANCE -- Svobodny Zitrek, No 15, 7 Mar 50

The Communists are systematically removing all who participated in an outstanding manner in the anti-Nazi resistance between 1939 and 1945. The first victim was General Kutlvasr, military commander of the Prague rebellion of May 1945, who has been sentenced to life imprisonment. Other victims include

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Steiner-Vesely, a Communist and commander of partisan detachments in Moravia, and Prof Dr Josef Grna, dean of the land survey department at the Benes Technical College in Brno and member of the resistance Council of Three, who was arrested on 13 January 1950. -- V. S.

COMMUNIST SUDETEN GERMANS DISSATISFIED -- Svobodny Zitrek, No 15, 7 Mar 50

The German "anti-fascists" who, after the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, remained in Czechoslovakia and joined the Communist Party have already had enough of Communist ideals. A total of 70,000 of them are requesting permission to leave. All wish to move to the American Zone, where they allegedly have relatives.

COMMUNISTS CONSOLIDATING POWER IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA -- Dagens Nyheter, No 77, 20 Mar 50

It is reported by Czechoslovak refugees arriving in Vienna from Prague that the greatest political offensive conducted by the Czechoslovak Communists since their seizure of power in February 1948 will be unleashed in the spring.

First, the Communist regime intends to isolate Czechoslovakia completely from the West. Measures already taken include the sealing of the 500-kilometer-long border facing Austria by building watch towers, connected by barbed-wire entanglements and minefields. The barricade line will be similar to that erected by Hungary along its western boundary last year.

Border and security police forces along the Austrian boundary will be increased. Moreover, a great purge will be conducted among representatives of Czechoslovak state monopoly and business enterprises abroad. Nearly half of Czechoslovakia's trade will continue to be with the western powers, but the regime will protect itself against the "capitalistic infection" threatened by such trade contacts.

In addition, control by the security police over foreign cultural institutions, particularly British and American organizations like the British Council, will be increased drastically. The government in Prague probably plans to demand that the personnel of such institutions be sharply reduced; it is possible that they will be ordered to suspend operations entirely.

It is reported that the Czechoslovak police also are planning a mass action against all opposition elements in the country along the same lines as the measures carried out in October 1949, when over 5,000 Czechoslovaks arrested were imprisoned or sent to forced labor camps. A net of special "confidence men" will be charged with improving contacts between the Communist Party and the people. These officials will provide the Communist national committees with information.

At present these Communist national committees in the rural areas are being extensively reorganized; they are to be converted into councils "to carry out the will of the state." The committees fall into four categories, the lowest for districts with 600 people or less, and the highest for cities of 60,000 population. The intention is to "promote the development of the rural areas to higher forms," i.e., to effect the collectivization planned by the government.

CLEMENTIS BEING PREPARED FOR MINDSZENTY-TYPE TRIAL -- Svenska Dagbladet, No 109, 24 Apr 50

Former Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Clementis, who resigned "voluntarily" some time ago, is now in "honorable imprisonment" at an old, historical castle

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in the Tatra Mountains. There, according to reliable information, he is being prepared for a big public heresy and treason trial along the lines of the Mindszenty trial in Hungary.

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